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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BAGHDAD 001570

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PTER](#) [PINS](#) [IZ](#)  
SUBJECT: KURDISTAN INTERIOR MINISTER ON MAY 9 TRUCK BOMBING  
REF: BAGHDAD 1555

Classified by James Yellin, Regional Coordinator, for reasons  
1.4 (b) and (d).

This is an Iraqi Kurdistan Regional Reconstruction Team  
Telegram.

11. SUMMARY: (C) Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) Minister  
of the Interior Sinjari told us that the May 9 truck bombing  
of the Ministry of Interior building in Erbil had killed 14  
and wounded 123, and was carried out by Al-Kataib Kurdistan,  
an element of Al-Qaida. He said the organizers of the attack  
are based outside of Kurdistan, in Kirkuk and Mosul. He  
warned that more attacks can be expected. END SUMMARY.

THE MAY 9 TRUCK BOMBING  
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12. (C) Regional Coordinator Yellin, accompanied by RRT  
Officer Gandle and USAID Representative Patterson, met on May  
10 with Karim Sinjari, Minister of the Interior of the  
Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG). Sinjari made the  
following points about the May 9 truck bombing at the  
Ministry of Interior (MOI) in Erbil:

-- The attack occurred at about 8:00 AM on May 9, when a  
truck carrying at least 800 kilos of TNT attempted to crash  
through the front gate barrier of the MOI. The MOI is  
adjacent to the Assayesh (Security Forces) Directorate.

-- The perpetrating organization was al-Kataib Kurdistan, an  
element of Dawlet al-Iraq al-Islamiya, another name for  
Al-Qaida. Dawlet al-Iraq al-Islamiya took public credit for  
the attack in an internet statement.

-- The organizers of the attack are based in Kirkuk and  
Mosul, outside of the Kurdistan Region, which makes it harder  
to capture them.

-- The truck was traced to an owner in Mosul. The driver has  
not yet been identified.

-- The MOI had been aware &for a long time8 that such an  
attack was being planned.

CASUALTIES AND DAMAGE  
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13. (C) According to Sinjari, the casualty toll from the  
attack is 14 dead, 123 injured. He added that:

-- Five of the wounded are in critical condition and have  
been evacuated to Iran for treatment. About 90 percent of  
the remaining injured have been treated and released from  
hospital.

-- Most casualties were passersby and people in neighboring  
buildings. Most workers at the MOI and Assayesh buildings

had not yet arrived for work; otherwise, casualties would have been much higher.

-- The MOI and Assayesh buildings have been rendered unusable and will need extensive repair of windows and other soft components. The buildings did not sustain structural damage, however.

#### PAST ATTACKS

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14. (C) The Minister also provided background on the past attacks, stating that:

-- Over three years ago, there were two other incidents involving vehicle bombs and the MOI. In September 2003, an attack was foiled after the driver was shot by guards before he could explode his vehicle. In December 2003, a car bomb exploded in the road outside the MOI.

--The last vehicle bombing occurred on June 20, 2005, when a suicide attack at traffic police training center in Erbil killed at least 20 police recruits.

-- In addition, over the past two years, the KRG has stopped three car bomb attempts before they could be carried out. The KRG said nothing about these because we didn't want the people to be afraid.8

#### NEW SECURITY MEASURES

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15. (C) Sinjari said that in the wake of the May 9 bombing, the MOI is tightening its procedures at checkpoints,

BAGHDAD 00001570 002 OF 002

especially for vehicles from Mosul and Kirkuk. He warned, however, that checking all vehicles is difficult, since every day 9000 vehicles from Mosul and 8000 from Kirkuk enter Kurdistan.

16. (C) Finally, Sinjari warned that more attacks can be expected. &If a man wants to kill himself, you cannot stop him,8 Sinjari said.

#### STATEMENT TO PRESS

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17. (C) After the meeting with Sinjari, Regional Coordinator made a statement for local TV. He condemned the attack, extended condolences to the families of the people killed, expressed our hope for a speedy recovery of the wounded, and said that we stand beside the Iraqi people in their fight against terrorism.

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